



Working To Save Lives
Údarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre
Road Safety Authority

Changes to the Driver Licensing System Effective After 30 June 2008

June 2008

Changes to the Driver Licensing System

In this document you will find information about changes to the driver licensing regime that will apply **after 30 June 2008**. The information provided is for guidance and is not an interpretation of the law.

Summary of changes as it applies to learner permit holders (the changes also apply to persons holding a provisional licence). All provisional licences are now considered to be learner permit.

- The exemption that allows a second learner permit holder in licence category B (car) to drive unaccompanied ends on 30 June 2008.
- After 30 June 2008 all learner permit holder driving cars, trucks, buses and articulated vehicles must be accompanied by a person who holds a full driving licence in the licence category for a continuous period of two years. Driving any of these vehicles without a qualified person accompanying is a penal offence.
- Penal Offences are being created for certain breaches of traffic law by learner drivers. These offences are punishable by a fine not exceeding €1,000 for a first offence.

More details about the changes together with questions and answers on the impact of each change are set out below.

An accompanying qualified person must hold a full driving licence for the vehicle category for at least two years.

Q. Which drivers and licence categories does this apply to?

A. After 30 June 2008 for holders of all learner permits covering Cars, Trucks, Buses and Articulated Vehicles (licence categories B, C1, C, D1, D, EB, EC1, EC, ED1 and ED).

Q: How will this change the law relating to second learner permit holders?

A: Before 30 June 2008 second learner permit holders could drive unaccompanied, this will no longer apply after 30 June.

Q: If I am a learner driver driving a car and the accompanying person has held a driving licence for two years in respect of a motorcycle, or a tractor/work vehicle, can this person act as an accompanying qualified person?

A: No, after 30 June the accompanying qualified person must hold a driving licence for two years for the category of vehicle you are driving, in this case a full

category B driving licence. This rule already applies to first time learner permit holders who took out a permit after 30 October 2007.

Q: If I hold a car driving licence from another EU country or from the European Economic Area (EEA) (Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland) and have held it for more than two years can I act as an accompanying person for a car learner driver?

A: Yes.

Q: If I hold a driving licence issued by a country other than an EU Member State or from an EEA country, can I act as an accompanying person?

A: No, such licence will not entitle you to act as an accompanying driver.

Q: If a person has passed a driving test to drive the vehicle category, can this person act as an accompanying qualified person?

A: No. the Certificate of Competency (pass driving test certificate) must be exchanged for a full licence and that licence must be held for two full years.

Q: If a person has held a full driving licence for an automatic vehicle for two years, can this person act as the accompanying person?

A: Yes, but only if the learner driver is driving an automatic vehicle in the same category. If s/he is driving a manual vehicle, the accompanying qualified person has to hold a full driving licence for at least two years for a manual vehicle.

Q: If I have a learner permit in category C1 (small truck) can I be accompanied by a person who holds a full driving licence for category B for two years and for category C1 for one year?

A: No, the accompanying qualified person must hold a full driving licence for two years in respect of the vehicle category which you wish to drive, in this case category C1.

Q: Can a person who has held his/her driving licence for a period of six years but has been disqualified for two of the last three years act as an accompanying driver?

A: No, the accompanying qualified person, at the time you are driving, must hold a full driving licence for two years in the vehicle category you are driving. S/he must not have been disqualified at any time in the previous two years.

Q: What is the penalty if a learner driver drives unaccompanied?

A: It is a penal offence and is punishable by a fine not exceeding €1,000 for a first offence.

Q: Must I be accompanied when I hold a certificate of competency but do not hold a full driving licence.

A: Yes, you are required to be accompanied.

Q: Must I be accompanied when I hold a full driving licence.

A: No, you are not required to be accompanied.

The carrying of a passenger by a learner motorcyclist is a penal offence.

Q. When is this change coming into effect?

A. This change will apply for all learner permit holders after 30 June 2008, it has applied to first time learner permit holders since 30 October 2007.

Q: Can I carry a passenger on any motorcycle category for which I hold a learner permit?

A: No, you must have a full driving licence for the motorcycle in order to be able to carry a passenger.

Q: Can I carry a passenger on a category A motorcycle for which I hold a learner permit if I have a full driving licence for category A1?

A: No.

Q: If I pass the motorcycle driving test, can I carry a passenger?

A: No, you must first exchange your certificate of competency (driving test pass certificate) for a full driving licence to be able to carry a passenger.

Q: What is the penalty if a learner motorcyclist carries a passenger?

- **A:** It is a penal offence and is punishable by a fine not exceeding €1,000 for a first offence.

It will be a penal offence for a holder of a category W (Tractor/Works vehicle) learner permit to carry a passenger unless the vehicle is constructed or adapted to carry a passenger and the passenger is a qualified person, ie. a person who holds a full driving licence for the vehicle category for at least two years.

Q. When is this change coming into effect?

A. This change will apply for all learner permit holders after 30 June 2008, it has applied to first time learner permit holders since 30 October 2007.

Q: When can I carry a passenger?

A: When the passenger holds a driving licence for the vehicle category for at least two years, and where the vehicle is constructed or adapted to carry a passenger.

Q: Can I carry a passenger who is a qualified person if there is no passenger seat?

A: No, the vehicle must be constructed/ adapted for the carriage of a passenger.

Q: What is the penalty if a learner in a works vehicle/tractor carries a passenger where the vehicle is not adapted and the accompanying person is not a full licence holder for two years?

- **A:** It is a penal offence and is punishable by a fine not exceeding €1,000 for a first offence.

It will be a penal offence for the holder of a learner permit (provisional licence) in respect of any licence category to carry in the vehicle any passenger for reward.

Q. When is this change coming into effect?

A. This change is effective after 30 June 2008 for all learner permit holders, it has applied to first time learner permit holders since 30 October 2007.

Q: Can I carry a passenger for reward in the course of my employment?

A: No, you may not do so while driving under a learner permit.

Q: If I have a category D1 learner permit to drive a minibus, can I carry a passenger for reward?

A: No, you may not do so while driving under a learner permit.

Q: What is the penalty if a learner carries a passenger for reward?

- **A:** : It is a penal offence and is punishable by a fine not exceeding €1,000 for a first offence.

It will be a penal offence for the holder of a learner permit for vehicles of category B, C1, C, D1 or D, (car, truck and bus) to drive such a vehicle while the vehicle is drawing a trailer.

Q. When is this change coming into effect?

A. This change is effective after 30 June 2008 for all learner permit holders, it has applied to first time learner permit holders since 30 October 2007.

Q: If I have a category B driving licence and a learner permit for category C1 (small truck) can I draw a trailer?

A: No, you may not drive a truck while drawing a trailer if you hold a learner permit for a truck. You must have the trailer entitlement for the category on the learner permit in order to draw a trailer.

Q: What is the penalty if a learner drives a vehicle with a trailer without a learner permit for the vehicle and trailer licence category eg car and trailer is licence category EB?

- **A:** It is a penal offence and is punishable by a fine not exceeding €1,000 for a first offence.

It will be a penal offence for the holder of a learner permit for vehicles of category B, C1, C, D1, D, EB, EC1, EC, ED1 or ED, to drive such a vehicle unless there are displayed on the vehicle rectangular plates or signs bearing the letter “L” not less than 15 centimetres high in red on a white ground, in clearly visible vertical positions to the front and rear of the vehicle.

Q. When is this change coming into effect?

A. This change is effective after 30 June 2008 for all learner permit holders, it has applied to first time permit holders since 30 October 2007 and to learner motorcyclists since 1 December 2007.

Q: If I have a category B full driving licence and a learner permit for category C (truck) or category D1 (minibus) must I display L plates?

A: Yes, you must display L plates on the truck or minibus if driving on a learner permit.

Q: What is the penalty if a learner drives a vehicle without displaying L plates?

- **A:** It is a penal offence and is punishable by a fine not exceeding €1,000 for a first offence.